



Putting Healthy Food
Within Reach

\$3.62

AVERAGE SNAP BENEFIT PER DAY IN IOWA - FY2015

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, *Average Monthly Food Stamp Benefits Per Person*, kff.org/state-indicator/avg-monthly-food-stamp-benefits/

67,209

SNAP PARTICIPANTS IN POLK COUNTY, IA - 2018

Iowa Department of Human Services, *Food Assistance Monthly Participation Report - February 2018*

72%

OF ALL U.S. FOOD ASSISTANCE IN 2013 WAS SNAP

Bread for the World, *Where Hungry Get Food*, <https://www.bread.org>

WHAT IS SNAP?

SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, is the program formerly known as food stamps. SNAP benefits are distributed each month to EBT (electronic benefits transfer) cards, which work like debit cards for select items.

Program participants can **not** use SNAP benefits to purchase alcohol, cigarettes, prepared foods, and any non-food items such as household supplies, medicine and pet food.

SNAP benefits are determined by a number of factors including income, other benefits and family size. To be eligible for SNAP in the state of Iowa, you must be a citizen or legal resident and your household income must be below 130% of the federal poverty guideline.

Federal nutrition programs, SNAP being the largest of these, distributed \$102.5 billion of food benefits in 2013. That same year, \$5.2 billion of food was distributed by private charities. Thus, SNAP and other federal nutrition assistance programs contributed nearly 20 times the amount of food assistance as did private charities.

We believe SNAP to be a vital program that benefits many of the people that we serve. When our Food Pantry Network was established in 1976, the five-day supply of food we distributed was meant to fill in the gap for emergency food not covered by food stamps.

Today, as DMARC has scaled down to providing a three-day supply of food (out of financial necessity) and rumors of cutting or block-granting dollars to SNAP are starting to swirl, we encourage you to educate yourself on the issue and share this article with your friends, neighbors and elected officials.